



## [Matthew 6:11](#)

(11) Give us today our daily bread.

*New International Version*

As the “staff of life,” bread is a well-known catchall term for food in general. In turn, the idea of God's supplying food to His creatures stands for His wondrous providence of everything necessary to maintain human life. Humans also require water, air, shelter, clothing, temperate climates, and many other necessities of life. [God](#) provides all these things and more on a second-by-second basis. In our prayers, [Jesus](#) wants us both to acknowledge what God provides so freely and abundantly and to convey our extraordinary needs to Him as the Giver of all good and needed things.

In [Matthew 6:11](#), Jesus is probably alluding to one of the great miracles of all time, God's supplying of food to the Israelites in the wilderness every day for 38 years, except on the weekly [Sabbath](#) ([Exodus 16:4-5](#), 14-24). In this daily miracle, a substance the Israelites called manna (meaning “What is it?”)—later poetically called “bread of heaven” and “angels' food” ([Psalm 78:23-25](#))—appeared on the ground each morning in quantities sufficient to feed millions of people. It lasted only one day; leaving it over for another day would cause it to breed worms and stink. So, the miracle of manna became a test for the Israelites to trust God to feed them adequately each day.

Our Savior's expression, “our daily bread,” is not an easy one to pin down because the Greek word for “daily,” *epiousion* (*Strong's* #1967), appears in the New Testament only in [Matthew 6:11](#) and nowhere else in Greek literature. Depending on the root word they link it to, scholars argue that the word can mean “necessary” or “essential”; “for this day” or “daily”; “for the following day”; or “for the future”! Early church fathers like Chrysostom understood it to mean “daily” or “for the coming day,” assuming that a

Christian would pray in the morning upon awakening and ask for food sufficient for that day's activity.

In another context in His Sermon on the Mount—in fact, later in this same chapter—Jesus uses the phrase “sufficient for the day” ([Matthew 6:34](#)), and He may intend the same idea in the Model Prayer. The context in which it appears is a passage on not worrying about physical needs like breath, clothing, food, and drink ([Matthew 6:25-34](#)). He urges His disciples to exercise [faith](#) in God to supply their needs, which He already knows and readily fulfills for those whose primary priorities are seeking His Kingdom and righteousness.

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

**[The Model Prayer \(Part Six\): Our Daily Bread](#)**

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